the Directorate General of Anti-Dumping & Allied Duties (DGAD), Ministry of Commerce & Industry of the Republic of India, and Bureau of Fair Trade for Imports & Exports of the Ministry of Commerce of PR China has been received. The proposal envisages holding discussions for promoting exchanges and cooperation in the area of trade remedy particularly anti-dumping and countervailing duty measures.

(c) Since 1992, the Directorate General of Anti Dumping & Allied Duties has initiated 166 cases. Out of these 166 cases, Chinese exporters are involved in 70 cases.

(d) The proposed discussion meachanism between the DGAD and Ministry of Commerce of PR China will not affect the anti-dumping cases. The proposal is to have discussions and exchange of technical information of the parties' respective ways of carrying out investigations and applying rules concerning trade defence instruments. The Authorities may draw upon individual cases that have been concluded but will not interfere with the legally established procedural and substantive framework or operation of ongoing investigations.

Outbreak of pestilence in Karnataka

1263. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that coffee planters are uprooting the coffee bushes in Chikmagalur district of Karnataka due to outbreak of pestilence in the form of white stem borer;

(b) whether Government have any plan to help the coffee growers to improve their coffee production;

(c) the state of affairs of tea, rubber and spices in the country; and

(d) whether there are any contingent plans/projects in place to help tide over the financial crisis faced by these growers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Adverse weather conditions have led to an incidence of white stem borer affecting the arabica growing regions of Karnataka, especially Lower Giris of Chikmagalur district. As stem borer kills the plants, the borer affected

plants have been uprooted by some coffee growers for replanting the same with new plants.

(b) In order to improve production, farm productivity, quality processing and marketability of Indian coffee and also to reduce the credit burden of the coffee growers, the Coffee Board is implementing a number of plan schemes under which various types of technical and financial assistance are provided to the coffee growers both in the traditional and non-traditional coffee growing regions. This includes providing assistance for developmental activities like replanting, water augmentation, extending support in the form of agricultural research through the Board's extension network etc. For combating the problem of white stem borer specifically, Coffee Board has introduced an ecofriendly pilot project for physically tracing, collecting and destroying the various stages of the pest by providing financial incentives to the growers. Further, for taking up replanting of vacancies arising out of the stem borer incidence and to re-build the plant density per unit area, Coffee Board has also implemented a project for raising and distribution of Arabica coffee seedlings through mini Self-Help Groups of coffee farmers, Board's research and extension farms and private nurseries.

For carrying out the coffee developmental activities, Coffee Board has been allocated a sum of Rs. 300 crores in the Tenth Plan as against Rs. 124 crores during the Ninth Plan period.

(c) The Government is not aware of outbreak of any major disease in tea, rubber and spices resulting in the uprooting of bushes/plants/trees.

(d) To mitigate the problems of tea and coffee growers arising from the present low prices of these commodities, Government of India has taken a series of steps which includes re-phasement/restructuring of loans taken by the tea & coffee growers from commercial banks, providing 5% interest relief to small coffee growers and 3% relief to large coffee growers on their working capital loans taken from financial institutions, undertaking campaigns to promote domestic consumption of tea and coffee, providing financial incentives for promoting export of these commodities and setting up a Price Stabilization Fund for the benefit of the small growers, of tea, coffee, natural rubber and tobacco. In the case of tea, Government has also set up a special fund for the development, modernization and rehabilitation of the sector. Government

has, in addition, notified the Tea Marketing Control Order 2003 and issued directives regarding changes in auction rules to provide for a more transparent price discovery mechanism for tea. In the case of spices, assistance is being provided for the production of planting material, establishment of nurseries, area expansion, pest and disease management, transfer of technology to growers etc. Similarly, suitable financial assistance is also provided to rubber growers, processors, exporters etc. for increasing production of Natural Rubber through expansion of area, enhancing the productivity, improving the quality of the produce to achieve competitiveness in the global markets, promoting agricultural and technological research in the interest of the industry besides promoting export of this commodity.

Exclusive marketing rights

1264. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the statistics of the EMR (Exclusive Marketing Rights) granted since 1995;

(b) the state of functioning of the 'mail-box' provisions established in the Indian IPR Bill; and

(c) Government's preparedness on the grant of Product Patenting to be started from 2005?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) Two exclusive marketing rights have been granted since 1995.

(b) The Patents Act, 1970 as amended by the Patents (Amendment) Act, 1999 provides for receipt and storage of product patent applications in the fields of drugs and medicines. As per the provisions in the law, these are to be kept unexamined till December 31,2004.

(c) Government has undertaken broad-based consultations with a view to amend the Patents Act, 1970 for providing product patent protection in the field of drugs and medicines. Administratively, Government has undertaken a project for the comprehensive modernisation of Patent Offices and substantial action has since been